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SUBJECT: Oman Media Reaction:

¶1. SUMMARY: Omani editorials this week lament the UK's "double standard" toward Israel, look with cautious hope on the outcome of the Copenhagen climate-change summit, and praise the prospect of a rapprochement between Lebanon and Syria. END SUMMARY.

"SURPRISINGLY SUBMISSIVE" UK DIPLOMACY

¶2. On December 18, private daily "Al Watan" (circulation 42,000) criticized British "submissiveness" to Israel, decrying "Double Standard Positions":

"Some governments, like the British, hold a double standard when dealing with issues of legitimacy and human rights of another country. They abide by UN resolutions and international laws and convention when it comes Iran or any other Arab country; however, if the other side of the conflict involves Israel, British diplomacy turns surprisingly submissive. The statements of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the Foreign Secretary regarding the arrest warrant of the Israeli Foreign Minister and their apology is proof. Israel is committing war crimes against innocent Palestinians, killing hundreds, and the British government is apologizing to them. How is that working?"

"MUCH DEPENDS" ON CLIMATE-CHANGE ACTION

¶3. State Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) highlighted the Copenhagen summit and described it as an awakening, asking "Can the World Save its Future?":

"The Climate Summit in Copenhagen, with the participation of 192 countries and their leaders, is of major importance. Not only because of the high degree of attention and cooperation among countries to deal with issues related to climate change, but also because of the desire of the leaders to save the future of mankind. Studies have shown that much will depend on climate changes, not

only on water resources, but also on varying rates and amounts of pollution, the rise in the temperature of the earth, and the melting of Arctic ice, all of which are critical phenomena in the future. The Copenhagen Summit reveals the high degree and sense of responsibility by all parties involved, with a genuine desire to reach a positive, beneficial agreement for all."

LEBANON AND SYRIA "TURN A PAGE"

14. On December 20, "Al Watan" hailed Syrian and Lebanese efforts to overcome their political differences, suggesting that they have averted further regional discord, in "Syria and Lebanon and A Page Turned":

"The visit of the Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri to Damascus and his meeting with President Bashar al-Assad has turned the page on a critical period of the Arab nation, ending a very confusing and sensitive era for the Arab world. Instigation against Syria had

MUSCAT 00001162 002 OF 002

reached a peak, pushing toward a violent confrontation between these two Arab countries. The ability of the two parties to overcome the crisis before it turned into a catastrophic conflict deserves appreciation. The Lebanese position is in fact worthy of respect. They have regained their confidence in the inevitability of their historical and geographical relations with Syria, having recognized that a conspiracy was aimed at diverting attention from the crucial issues and distracting attention from goals that unify all brothers."

SCHMIERER
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